

**For Immediate Release:**

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**Love is in the Air at City Hall: Peregrine Falcon Romance Returns**  
***San José FalconCam goes live on Valentine's Day – and this Spring, Clara's got a new beau***

**What:** The webcam focused on the nest box of San José City Hall's resident wild peregrine falcons returns this Valentine's Day. Last year, this avian reality show chronicled Clara and José from romance to the birth and fledging of three young falcons.

**When:** **Valentine's Day – February 14, 2008**

**Where:** Two locations online

City of San José website: [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov)

Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group website: [www.scpbrg.org](http://www.scpbrg.org)

**Background:** San José's Richard Meier-designed City Hall opened in October 2005. Employees first noticed a pair of falcons, whom birdwatchers named José and Clara, in the Spring of 2006. The Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group placed the nest box on the south end of the City Hall tower later that year.

In early spring 2007, José and Clara were again regularly observed together in the area. The web camera was positioned near the nest box. By mid-February the birds were observed engaging in typical courtship behavior, and by late March, José and Clara had laid a total of three eggs in the nest box. All three eggs hatched successfully, an extremely rare occurrence, on April 28, and the world watched the progress of the three young peregrine falcons. The chance of survival for the fledglings was constantly in peril, while they learned to survive in a big city environment. As the three fledged in June, middle school students entered a contest to name them. Hiko (male), Spirit (female), and Esperanza (female) were the winning names.

The youngsters left San José over the summer to find territories of their own. They were banded with identification bands, and bird watchers in the East Bay have discovered Esperanza frequenting the Siebel building in Emeryville.

José was last seen in July. As falcons typically mate for life, birdwatchers are concerned about the disappearance of this devoted mate and father. Since then, Clara has been courted by at least two peregrines (named Carlos and Salvador). Following a brief skirmish on Jan. 29, it appears that Carlos is the victor. He and Clara have been spotted in duo flight, hunting together, and visiting the nest box.

Over the course of last season, the Falcon Cam site received over 400,000 hits. More than 1,150 people belong to the discussion group, with viewers as far away as New Zealand, Bolivia, England, Egypt – and including U.S. soldiers serving in Iraq.

In 1970, only two pairs of peregrine falcons remained in the wild in California. Today, thanks to extraordinary conservation work, there are more than 250 nesting pairs, including those at San José City Hall.